

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method comprising:
 - 2 obtaining a request to provide a service, wherein
 - 3 the request conforms to a request format defined in a first language, and
 - 4 at least one device of a plurality of devices provides the service;
 - 5 identifying one device of the at least one device to provide the service; and
 - 6 converting the request to a second request in a second language, wherein
 - 7 the second language is used for communication with the one device.
 - 1 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - 2 directing the second request to the one device.
 - 1 3. The method of claim 2 wherein
 - 2 the first language is a markup language;
 - 3 the second language is a device-specific language of a plurality of device-specific languages,
 - 4 wherein
 - 5 each of the plurality of devices communicates using one of the plurality of device-specific languages.
 - 1 4. The method of claim 2 wherein
 - 2 the request format comprises
 - 3 at least one instruction, and
 - 4 data to be used when performing the at least one instruction; and
 - 5 the second request conforms to the request format.
 - 1 5. The method of claim 4 wherein
 - 2 the request specifies use of a specific feature of a specific device of the plurality of devices
 - 3 by
 - 4 specifying an optional variable , and
 - 5 providing a value for the optional variable;
 - 6 and
 - 7 the converting the request to the second request in the second language comprises
 - 8 including the optional variable in the at least one instruction of the second request,
 - 9 and
 - 10 including the value for the optional variable in the data of the second request, wherein
 - 11 the optional variable and the value specify use of the specific feature.

1 6. The method of claim 2 further comprising:
2 sending a response to the request.

1 7. The method of claim 6 wherein
2 the response conforms to a response format defined in the first language.

1 8. The method of claim 7 wherein
2 the response format comprises
3 at least one instruction; and
4 data to be used when performing the at least one instruction.

1 9. A system comprising:
2 obtaining means for obtaining a request to provide a service, wherein
3 the request conforms to a request format defined in a first language, and
4 at least one device of a plurality of devices provides the service;
5 identifying means for identifying one device of the at least one device to provide the service;
6 and
7 converting means for converting the request to a second request in a second language,
8 wherein
9 the second language is used for communication with the one device.

1 10. The system of claim 9 further comprising:
2 directing means for directing the second request to the one device.

1 11. The system of claim 10 wherein
2 the request format comprises
3 at least one instruction, and
4 data to be used when performing the at least one instruction, and
5 the second request conforms to the request format.

1 12. The system of claim 11 further comprising:
2 first including means for including an optional variable in the at least one instruction of the
3 second request, and
4 second including means for including a value of the optional variable in the data of the
5 second request, wherein

6 the optional variable and the value specify use of a specific feature of a specific
7 device of the plurality of devices.

1 13. The system of claim 10 further comprising:
2 sending means for sending a response to the request.

1 14. The system of claim 13 wherein
2 the response conforms to a response format defined in the first language.

1 15. The system of claim 14 wherein
2 the response format comprises
3 at least one instruction; and
4 data to be used when performing the at least one instruction.

1 16. A computer-readable medium comprising:
2 obtaining instructions to obtain a request to provide a service, wherein
3 the request conforms to a request format defined in a first language, and
4 at least one device of a plurality of devices provides the service;
5 identifying instructions to identify one device of the at least one device to provide the service;
6 and
7 converting instructions to convert the request to a second request in a second language,
8 wherein
9 the second language is used for communication with the one device.

1 17. The computer-readable medium of claim 16 further comprising:
2 directing instructions to direct the second request to the one device.

1 18. The computer-readable medium of claim 17 wherein
2 the request format comprises
3 at least one instruction, and
4 data to be used when performing the at least one instruction, and
5 the second request conforms to the request format.

1 19. The computer-readable medium of claim 18 further comprising:
2 first including instructions to include an optional variable in the at least one instruction of the
3 second request, and

4 second including instructions to include a value of the optional variable in the data of the
5 second request, wherein
6 the optional variable and the value specify use of a specific feature of a specific
7 device of the plurality of devices.

1 20. The computer-readable medium of claim 17 further comprising:
2 sending instructions for sending a response to the request.

1 21. The computer-readable medium of claim 20 wherein
2 the response conforms to a response format defined in the first language.

1 22. The computer-readable medium of claim 21 wherein
2 the response format comprises
3 at least one instruction; and
4 data to be used when performing the at least one instruction.

1 23. A computer system comprising:
2 a processor for executing instructions; and
3 a memory for storing the instructions, wherein
4 the memory is coupled to the processor, and
5 the instructions comprise:
6 obtaining instructions to obtain a request to provide a service, wherein
7 the request conforms to a request format defined in a first language,
8 and
9 at least one device of a plurality of devices provides the service;
10 identifying instructions to identify one device of the at least one device to
11 provide the service; and
12 converting instructions to convert the request to a second request in a second
13 language, wherein
14 the second language is used for communication with the one device.

1 24. The computer system of claim 23 wherein the instructions further comprise:
2 directing instructions to direct the second request to the one device.

1 25. The computer system of claim 24 wherein
2 the request format comprises
3 at least one instruction, and

4 data to be used when performing the at least one instruction, and
5 the second request conforms to the request format.

1 26. The computer system of claim 25 wherein the instructions further comprise:
2 first including instructions to include an optional variable in the at least one instruction of the
3 second request, and
4 second including instructions to include a value of the optional variable in the data of the
5 second request, wherein
6 the optional variable and the value specify use of a specific feature of a specific
7 device of the plurality of devices.

1 27. The computer system of claim 24 wherein the instructions further comprise:
2 sending instructions for sending a response to the request.

1 28. The computer system of claim 27 wherein
2 the response conforms to a response format defined in the first language.

1 29. The computer system of claim 28 wherein
2 the response format comprises
3 at least one instruction; and
4 data to be used when performing the at least one instruction.

1 30. A system comprising:
2 an obtaining module to obtain a request to provide a service, wherein
3 the request conforms to a request format defined in a first language, and
4 at least one device of a plurality of devices provides the service;
5 an identifying module to identify one device of the at least one device to provide the service;
6 and
7 a converting module to convert the request to a second request in a second language, wherein
8 the second language is used for communication with the one device.

1 31. The system of claim 30 further comprising:
2 a directing module to direct the second request to the one device.

1 32. The system of claim 31 wherein
2 the request format comprises
3 at least one instruction, and

4 data to be used when performing the at least one instruction, and
5 the second request conforms to the request format.

1 33. The system of claim 32 further comprising:
2 a first including module to include an optional variable in the at least one instruction of the
3 second request, and
4 a second including module to include a value of the optional variable in the data of the
5 second request, wherein
6 the optional variable and the value specify use of a specific feature of a specific
7 device of the plurality of devices.

1 34. The system of claim 31 further comprising:
2 a sending module for sending a response to the request.

1 35. The system of claim 34 wherein
2 the response conforms to a response format defined in the first language.

1 36. The system of claim 35 wherein
2 the response format comprises
3 at least one instruction; and
4 data to be used when performing the at least one instruction.

1 37. An application programming interface comprising:
2 a request definition for a first command to provide a request for a service, wherein
3 the request conforms to a request format defined in a first language,
4 the request format is specified in the request definition,
5 at least one device of a plurality of devices provides the service,
6 one device of the at least one device is identified to provide the service in response to
7 the first command,
8 the request is converted to a second request in a second language, and
9 the second language is used for communication with the one device.

1 38. The application programming interface of claim 37 further comprising:
2 a response definition for a response format in which a response to the request is provided.

1 39. The application programming interface of claim 37 further comprising:

- 2 an initialization definition for a second command to initialize prior to providing the request
- 3 for the service.